

When we leave here today, we ought to say: This voting rights bill and the others will not be in vain. Every year from now on, we're going to have more registered voters and more people voting. We're going to make the system work. The law empowers us to do it. It's now up to us to assume the responsibility to see that it gets done.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Joel Shulkin, University of New Hampshire junior who was instrumental in achieving reform of that State's voter registration laws and who introduced the President. H.R. 2, approved May 20, was assigned Public Law No. 103-31.

### **Exchange With Reporters After Signing the National Voter Registration Act of 1993**

*May 20, 1993*

#### **Senator Boren's Budget Proposal**

**Q.** Mr. President, can you talk to us?

**Q.** Can you accept Senator Boren's entitlement cuts?

**Q.** What's your reaction to Senator Boren's compromise with Danforth?

**The President.** Well, my first reaction was that it was a huge shift in lowering taxes on people with incomes above \$100,000 and hurting people, both elderly people and working people just barely above the poverty line. It's basically a \$40 billion shift away from wealthy Americans right onto people just above the poverty line, the elderly and the working poor. So I don't support that. I think that's a mistake.

**Q.** Would you rule out that kind of compromise to get rid of the energy tax?

**The President.** I think that that is not a good thing to do if you read the details of it. Obviously, the main purpose of some of them is to do away with the BTU tax, but the mechanics shift over \$40 billion away from people with incomes above \$135,000 down to elderly and working people just barely above the poverty line. I don't think that's good. There is also another provision which, if it's implemented in the way they

propose, would continue to shift health care costs onto private citizens and private employers, which would hurt the economy and hurt jobs. So those are the two things which concern me.

Otherwise, I'm glad to have people talking and coming up with new ideas. But those are bad things.

**Q.** —have you essentially heard enough—

**The President.** I can just tell you what—I've given you my answer. Look, we had 12 years where we made this economy more unequal and unfair. And to move \$40 billion off of upper income people to people barely above the poverty line, it seems to me, is not a good way to go.

NOTE: The exchange began at 12:50 p.m. on the South Lawn at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

### **Remarks on Cuban Independence Day**

*May 20, 1993*

Before I say anything else, I want to acknowledge the presence here of some very special friends of mine, Jorge Perez, Jorge Bolano, and Willie Braceras, who helped me in Miami last year when I hardly knew anyone who lived in south Florida and when I needed to learn a lot about the issues affecting Cuban-Americans. I want to say a special word of thanks, too, to Simon Ferro who helped me to organize this event.

We join all Cubans today in celebrating this, the 91st anniversary of Cuban independence. Just as Cubans struggled for independence nearly a century ago today, a new generation of Cubans in our country and our time are struggling for freedom and democracy. And the American people stand by them and their brothers and sisters in Cuba as they struggle for freedom and democracy.

The people of Cuba deserve to be free and to determine their own future through free elections. They deserve to be free of political abuse and dictatorship. Our administration